

issues that are a fundamental part of securing Israel's future.

Last week, U.S. Special Envoy George Mitchell announced the beginning of proximity talks that require him to address the concerns of both the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli government prior to an attempt to restart direct negotiations on the final status issues. The United States has a responsibility to act in good faith as an honest broker.

Negotiations will not be successful as long as the United States continues to stand by idly as illegal settlements continue to be built in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Furthermore, 1.5 million people in Gaza continue to suffer without basic services and Palestinians in the West Bank are denied the freedom of movement and prosperity by the separation barrier and hundreds of check points.

The United States can better demonstrate its strong support for Israel by helping it move toward good-faith negotiations that ensure a peaceful and prosperous future for Palestinians as well.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, on roll-call No. 277 taken May 19, 2010, H.R. 5325, the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, had I not had a family emergency which required my immediate return to California, I would have proudly voted "yes".

With increasing global competition, it is critically important that we boost our country's research potential and expand our commitment to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education. Economic growth requires innovation; innovation requires robust research; and effective research requires a broadly educated workforce. I am deeply saddened that COMPETES fell victim to short-sighted Republican political gamesmanship, and I look forward to working with House Science and Technology Chair BART GORDON to get COMPETES reauthorized through another legislative vehicle.

JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the rich heritage and invaluable contributions that Jewish Americans have made to our Nation and to the community that I am proud to represent in Missouri's First Congressional District.

The earliest Jewish immigrants came to St. Louis over two hundred years ago.

Like most new Americans, they came seeking a refuge from persecution and discrimination, with the hope of building productive lives and practicing their faith, without fear.

In St. Louis, and across the Nation, Jewish Americans have excelled in every facet of our society. From commerce, to the arts, to edu-

cation, medicine, the law, government, and in our armed forces.

Jewish Americans have enriched our Nation and contributed much to our shared cultural heritage.

I also want to make special mention of the long and historic partnership between the African American and the Jewish American communities, in the pursuit of social justice, civil rights, voting rights and equal protection under the law.

During the most trying times of the civil rights movement, Jewish Americans and African Americans marched together, stood together, protested together, prayed together, and even died together, to advance the cause of full citizenship and real equality for all.

That partnership and common pursuit of justice endures today.

In my district, I am blessed to represent a large, vibrant Jewish community with many outstanding congregations, educational and cultural groups and social service agencies; including: the Jewish Federation of St. Louis; the Jewish Community Center; Jewish Family and Children's Services; the Jewish Community Relations Council; the St. Louis Holocaust Museum and Learning Center, Barnes-Jewish Hospital, the Central Agency for Jewish Education, and many others.

Jewish Americans have helped shape our Nation's history, and their unending commitment to faith, family, learning and social justice will continue to strengthen the United States.

I am proud to join with my colleagues to mark Jewish American Heritage Month.

COMMENDING DAVID BARTON FOR EDUCATING AMERICA ABOUT OUR NATION'S RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

HON. BILL POSEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Mr. POSEY. Madam Speaker, recently, I had the opportunity to tour our nation's Capitol building with one of our nation's leading scholars, David Barton. David Barton is an accomplished author, speaker, and historian who focuses on helping Americans explore and understand our nation's moral, religious, and constitutional heritage. It is critically important that all of us have a deeper understanding and appreciation of our nation's founding.

Mr. Barton has dedicated his life to studying historical documents from the foundation of our nation and helping Americans understand the impact moral and religious teaching and beliefs had on our nation's Founding Fathers and the direction of our nation. Through his work, he teaches that in addition to a constitutional foundation, our nation has undeniable religious and moral underpinnings.

Mr. Barton is founder and president of Wallbuilders, a national organization that presents "America's forgotten history and heroes." The organization seeks to educate citizens about the important role that religious faith had on our Founding Fathers and our nation's institutions, including our government.

Mr. Barton has received substantial recognition for his work, including being named "one of the 25 Most Influential Evangelicals" by

TIME magazine and receiving several Angel, Who's Who in Education, and Telly Awards, as well as the George Washington Honor medal.

I commend Mr. Barton for his commitment to fostering a scholarly understanding of America's heritage and for the important work he does in studying and teaching regarding the Biblical values that guided our Founders during the birth of our nation more than 225 years ago. I have been on several Capitol tours with Mr. Barton, and his knowledge about the religious foundation of our country never ceases to amaze me. It is through this type of work that Americans gain a better understanding of what the Founders expected our nation to be like and what we should expect from our elected leaders and the laws they create.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Barton and the work that he does to educate Americans about our nation's past so that America can be a beacon to the world.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today our national debt is \$12,975,292,327,567.97.

On January 6, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$2,336,866,581,274.10 so far this Congress.

This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE DEDICATION CEREMONY FOR CONGREGATION OLAM TIKVAH

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Congregation Olam Tikvah on the occasion of the Dedication Ceremony for their recent expansion.

Congregation Olam Tikvah was formed in 1964 by six Fairfax County families who recognized the need for a synagogue that would serve the Kings Park, Springfield, Fairfax and Annandale areas. The congregation was initially led by Reb Jack Frankel who, although not an ordained rabbi, provided religious leadership and guidance in those early days.

From these modest beginnings, Olam Tikvah has grown into a vibrant community and is the spiritual and religious home to over 620 Jewish families in the Northern Virginia area. Along with this growth in membership has come an expansion of programs which now include a preschool, child and adult education classes, ritual support, a Men's Club, a Sisterhood and a senior social group.